

Tale Feathers

August 2003

Volume 70

Number 6

So, What IS the St. Louis Audubon Society, Anyway?

Tuesday, September 16, 2003 at 7:30 p.m. at the Powder Valley Nature Center.

YOUR St. Louis Audubon Society-There's More Than You Imagined

Yes, as most people know, we're big on birds. But what does that really mean, and is there more? Did you know that during the 2002/2003 school year, our volunteers presented educational programs to over 2000 students, or that we offer programs as diverse as birds and bats, owls and rivers? Come hear, see, and feel just what we're all about-from field trips, to bird monitoring, to classroom programs, to conservation advocacy, and much, much more. Meet the people that make it happen and find out if there's something interesting for you. Bring along that friend or relative that looks at you sideways when you say, "Audubon." Whether you're new, been around for years, or haven't even joined, we guarantee you'll learn something new about St. Louis Audubon!

Open to all-members or not. Refreshments will be available, and door prizes, too!!

From the intersection of Interstates 44 & 270, take Watson Rd. to Geyer Rd. Turn north on Geyer for 200 yds. to Cragwold Rd. Go west on Cragwold for 1 mi. to nature center entrance on right.

Follow drive to parking lot. Enter building through left entrance.

Questions, call Cathy Devine at 314-962-3460.



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St. Louis Audubon Society

The Simple Things

Mitch Leachman

Difficult times.
Terrible times.
Violent times.
Deadly times.

Orange alerts.
Suicide bombings.
Targets of opportunity.
Killed in action.

Overwhelmed.
Afraid.
Angry.
Depressed.

Slow down.
Meditate.
Observe.
Escape.

The living room.
The backyard.
Local park.
Wildlife refuge.

Cat basking.
Cardinals courting.
Sun setting.
Hawks soaring.

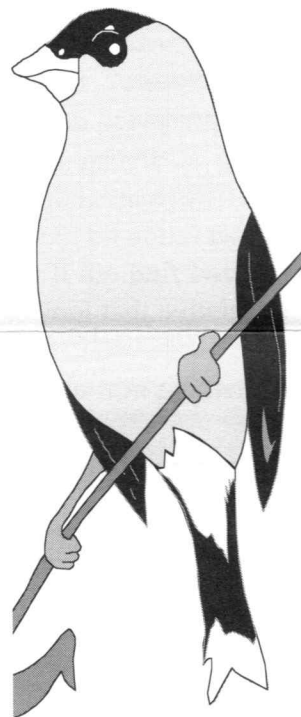
Comforted.
Amused.
Renewed.
Inspired.

This is your opportunity to get clean!! Volunteers needed for
Operation Clean Stream
August 24, 2003. If interested in volunteering, please contact Jerry Castillon at (314) 391-7586.

Welcome New Members!!

Charles Abele
Walter Agnew
David Alpers
Dorothy Armbruster
Margaret Ayres
Barry Bainter
Carl e. Barker
Julie Barr
Anne Desloge Bates
Barbara Beire
C.B. Birmingham
Elizabeth Brooks
Steve Brown
Mary Bullerick
Donald J. Burkit
Allan Burns
Mrs. Helen Cadoret
Lucille M. Charpiot
Alexandra Cowen
Francis Crissman
Roy Davis
Selma Dennis
Mary Ann Donahoe
Constance Duchinsky
Roger Ebers
Edgar W. Ellerman
Kathleen J. Emery
Jennifer Escher
Christian Femberg
Mr. and Mrs. Fiala
James Fiete
Mr./Mrs. Michael
Filmore
Dr. James S. Fulbright
Eugene S. Gifford
Jane Gilchrist
Frank Gilmore
Thelma A. Glenn
Kenneth Goldman
Rita K. Gram
Bruce Grench
Robert Hahn
Tom Halstead
P. Hanssen
Anna Haselhorst

Heather Heights
Garden Club
Betty Jeter
Vincentia Jones
Clarence R. Kamper
Randy Korotev
Pam Kuehler
Robert F. Kuethe
Susan Leahy
Barbara Lee
Brian Lindsey



Norma Lockman
Stacey Ludlum
Ann Mack
Jerzy Majka
Dennis J. Martin
Katheryn R.
McCormick
Dr. and Mrs. W.
McDaniel
Brenda McDonald
Patricia McKeivitt
Ms. Mary McMacon
Gloria McNamara
Jo Ellen Meier

Ralph Millidge
Cathy Murphy
William Oris
Leroy Ortmeyer
Dorothy Parker
C.B. Peper
Steven Pierce
Bonnie Potter
Joyce Quigley
Mistti Ritter
Saliane Robinson
Schramm
Melodie Sept
L. Silberstein
David G Skelton
Charmaine Smith
Dorothy J. Smith
Marilyn Smith
Martha A. Spalding
Nick Torrillo
Cindy Usher
Alison Uzieblo
Joseph A. Vogl
Sheila Voss
Willard B. Walker
Alfred Weber
Barbara J. White
Marguerite Wilson
Fay M. Wright
Pat Young
Edward Zimmerman

Transfers

Ronald A. Charles
Mildred Fry
Kay Kiefer
Philip Meyer
Nathan Pate
Tom Vaughan
Virginia P. Young

Conservation Report

-Sue Gustafson, Vice President Conservation

Spring Bird Fatalities Survey Results: While most birders were enjoying the sounds and sights of spring bird migration, a hardy group of twelve volunteers was surveying the streets and sidewalks of downtown St. Louis at 6:00 am daily April 28-May 11 to determine if St. Louis has a problem with lighted buildings detrimentally attracting migrating birds. This was the third year the survey has been done. Other cities such as Chicago, New York, and Toronto have a large problem with lighted buildings causing hundreds of bird fatalities during migration. Such cities have enacted the Fatal Lights Awareness Program or a Lights Out campaign to education building owners to turn the lights off during migration. This year we found 57 fatalities comprising 24 species. We also found four stunned birds of three species that were taken to a safe location and successfully released. We concluded that that there were no buildings lit in entirety. The few buildings that did have a few floors lit or a top structure lit did not appear to be the cause of fatalities. As was surmised from this and the previous years' studies which plotted the location pattern of fatalities, we determined that we have more of a problem with reflective glass or just the building presence in general, particularly with the species that are known to migrate at low levels such as Ovenbird, White-throated Sparrow, and Tennessee Warbler. Of the 57 fatalities, 19 were White-throated Sparrows, eight were Ovenbirds, and five were Tennessee Warblers. We are providing our results to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) as part of the FWS Urban Bird Conservation Treaty Program in St. Louis. If you are interested in the complete survey results and accompanying location map, contact me at smgustafson@juno.com or 314-968-8128. Thanks to survey team volunteers **Ron Beer, Dianne Benjamin, Jerry and Lynne Breakstone, Rachel Crandell, Sue Gustafson, Mitch Leachman, Pat McCormick, Sherry McCowan, Karen Meyer, Mike Thelen, and Linda Tossing.**

Pesticide Awareness: SL Audubon has participated in meetings with St. Louis County officials and the media, along with providing input at public meetings to discuss the detrimental effects of aerial spraying for mosquitoes, particularly as mosquito control has

received increased attention due to the presence of West Nile Virus over the last several years. **Jim Holsen** has represented Audubon in these meetings, and has done extensive research in addition to utilizing information from National Audubon's senior scientists who promote the use of Integrated Pest Management (in lieu of aerial spraying) to control mosquito populations in a safe manner. Aerial spraying can be harmful to birds, other wildlife, other beneficial insects, and humans (particularly those who are immune suppressed or suffer from asthma.) We are pleased that such progressive municipalities as University City have issued a resolution to NOT spray for mosquitoes this summer and to use safer means of mosquito control instead. For more info on West Nile Virus and alternatives to pesticides, visit www.audubon.org/bird/wnv/index.html and www.audubon.org/bird/at_home/reduce_pesticides.html.

Missouri's Important Bird Areas (IBA) program: Perhaps you've read of the global IBA program in Audubon magazine. Started in Europe by BirdLife International in 1981, the IBA program has been administered by National Audubon in the United States since 1995. Missouri is now implementing its IBA program, and the first meeting of the Steering and Technical Committees convened on July 12. The program will engage birders and local Audubon chapters in identifying, nominating, and monitoring IBA's. An IBA must provide habitat for a least one of the following: species of conservation concern, restricted-range species, species concentrated in one habitat type, or species vulnerable because they congregate in high numbers. The Technical Committee is now defining state level criteria and developing the form to nominate a site to become an IBA. More details will be provided in this Conservation column as they become available.

Birding Trips for August and September

John Solodar

August 2, Saturday - SLAS Shorebird Ramble. Joe Eades and Jim Malone will lead this trip which may turn into an all day affair. Horseshoe Lake has a draw down in mid-July that leads to a lot of shorebirds here in late July to early August. We may also try Riverlands, Indian Lake and Columbia Bottom. Bring lunch and water if you plan to go all day. 7:30 AM

August 17, Sunday - WGNSS trip at the Gaddy Bird Garden in Tower Grove Park. Led by Bob Kleiger at 7:30 AM

August 24, Sunday - WGNSS trip to Riverlands led by Dave Rogles. Meet in Teal Pond parking lot at 8:00 AM.

August 31, Sunday - WGNSS trip at the Gaddy Bird Garden in Tower Grove Park. Led by Mike Brady at 8:00 AM

Sept 6, Saturday - SLAS trip at the Gaddy Bird Garden in Tower Grove Park. Led by Torrey Berger and Mike Thelen at 7:30 AM. Fall migration should be in full swing.

Sept 7, Sunday - WGNSS trip at the Gaddy Bird Garden in Tower Grove Park. Led by Sherry McCowan at 8:00 AM

Sept 13, Saturday - SLAS trip to Busch Conservation Area and Weldon Spring. Leaders for this 1/2 day trip are Torrey Berger and Mike Grant. Busch is a good location for those confusing fall migrants.

Sept 14, Sunday - WGNSS trip to the Epstein Prairie at West Tyson County Pa. Led by Mike Brady at 8:00 AM

Sept 20, Saturday - SLAS trip joint with St. Louis County Parks Dept. Bird-n-Learn program at the Creve Coeur Lake/Little Creve Coeur Lake complex. Join leader Mary Dueren at the green roofed building 1.5 miles north of Olive on Creve Coeur Mill Rd, next to Mallard Lake, at 8:00 AM.

Sept 21, Sunday - WGNSS trip to Riverlands led by Dave Rogle. Meet in Teal Pond parking lot at 8:00 AM.

Sept 27, Saturday - SLAS annual Carlyle Pelagic Trip. We'll be looking for passerines in Hazlett State Park in the morning, gulls midday from boats on the lake and then shorebirds in the afternoon. The leaders will be Joe Eades and Paul Bauer with the help of Dan Kassebaum. This is an all day trip with a charge for the use of the boats on the lake. Contact Dency Kahn at dency@vierck.us or 314-997-4555 to sign up or to obtain details. There is a limit on the number of people that the boats can accommodate.

How to get there

Gaddy bird garden in Tower Grove Park - I-44 or I-64 to south Kingshighway. Go about 1 mile to left on Magnolia. Park on street; walk to the brushy area (Gaddy Bird Garden) at the northwest corner of the park.

Horseshoe Lake - Take I-70 east across the Poplar Street Bridge. Exit at Hwy 111 (exit 6) and turn left. Go about 2 miles to the State Park entrance (on the left). Meet at 1st parking lot on the right.

Busch Conservation Area - Take U.S.40/I-64 west into St. Charles County. Take Hwy 94 south from U.S 40 about 1 mile to Hwy D. Turn right and go about 1.5 miles to the entrance on the right. Turn left at the "T" to Hampton Lake and meet in the parking lot.

Epstein Prairie - From I-44 West exit at Lewis Rd and go left on the North Outer Rd. Follow North Outer Rd to the parking lot at the Headquarters building for Route 66 State Park. We'll carpool from here due to limited parking at Epstein Prairie.

Creve Coeur Lake/Little Creve Coeur Lake complex. From the western leg of I-270 go west on Olive for 2.0 miles. Turn right on Creve Coeur Mill Road and travel about 1.5 miles to the green roofed building on the right, adjacent to Mallard Lake.

Riverlands - Take Hwy 367 north from I-270. The designation changes to Hwy 67 just beyond the 4th traffic light, but continue. Turn right on last road just before the Clark Bridge at the Mississippi River. (Fisca gas station at this turn.) Turn right on the first road and park in the Teal Pond parking lot.

Carlyle Lake - Take I-64 east across the Poplar Street Bridge. Exit I-64 at Hwy 50 East (toward Carlyle). Follow Hwy 54 to Hwy 127 and turn left at the junction. Turn right into McDonald's. Meet in the parking lot.

Monthly Programs Were a Hit

Mitch Leachman

Every so often I ask myself if our monthly programs are really worthwhile and if I have the time available to devote to their planning. Then, something happens to again put both those concerns to rest. This time it was the opportunity to reflect on last year's resounding successes. With just seven programs, we had over 300 attendees. Two programs drew over 100 people each, and this is just the second full year since the Society re-instituted the monthly program format.

Now, let me take a moment to thank all of last year's speakers. Some are practiced speakers and some are novices, some live local and some travel far, but all gave of their time and energy to help educate and entertain us all. Please help me thank Dave Pierce from the Wild Bird Center, Dr. Patricia Parker and her students from UMSL, Jim Rathert and John Hoskins from MDC, Dave Tylka from Meramec Community College, and the staff at the World Bird Sanctuary. Finally, thanks to all our members for coming out and taking an interest in your St. Louis Audubon Society.

Looking forward to this year and just to peek your interest, a few of the invited speakers include Susan Flader from the University of Missouri-Columbia, Dr. John Blake from UMSL, and biologists from MDC to discuss the prairie chicken in Missouri. Lastly, it gives me great pleasure to announce that Stephen Mahfood, director of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, has agreed to speak at our Annual Meeting on Friday April 16, 2004. Please watch next month's newsletter closely as I hope to publish the program schedule for the entire year.

President's Report

Bill Salsgiver

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jim Malone for moving St. Louis Audubon into the computer age. We have a web site - have had for several years. (Check it out at www.stlouisaudubon.org) Jim was responsible for starting the site, growing it, and maintaining it during its whole existence. Jim has gone above and beyond the call getting us a high quality presence on the web, but he would like to turn over the reins to someone with fresh ideas. Or even better, if we could identify a few people who would be interested, we could try a bunch of new ideas. So, if you have the slightest interest in helping with this task, we would love to hear from you. Seattle Audubon has a great web site (www.seattleaudubon.org) that they maintain via committee. A few people cover the graphic design, a few keep up the content, and a few are the technical gurus. My goal is to get enough people interested that we divide up the work and create an even better site than we have now - building on what Jim started. Please contact me if you have any ideas along this line.

Education Committee Report

The Education Committee completed its Fall/Spring Session the end of May 2003. There were 3057 children and 828 adults serviced by our programs. Included with this was a full day program for the Girl Scouts to earn their Conservation/Wildlife Badge. The committee has recently added 4 new members to bring the total to 12 members. This should allow us time to do more programs starting in September for our Fall/Spring 2003/2004 Session.

At this time, we have a total of 8 different programs that we present to schools, garden clubs, nature groups, and any other interested groups. Our ages range from kindergarten on--we have no age limit for adults, but at this time, most of our programs for children are in the primary and middle schools.

Anyone interested in joining our group is welcome to attend our next meeting which will be held at the home of Vicki Flier, on Friday, August 15, at 9:30 pm. Please call Vicki at 314-968-9166 for directions.

NAS Board of Directors Meets in St. Louis

On June 6, 7, and 8, Audubon Missouri (AM) and the St. Louis Audubon Society (SLAS) hosted the National Audubon Society (NAS) Board of Directors quarterly board meetings in St. Louis. This busy weekend was kicked off on Friday morning with a field trip to the new Missouri state park at Columbia Bottoms. Over 150 people convened at the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers. The NAS board and staff were greeted by a number of Missouri dignitaries from MDC, DNR and Audubon Missouri. Despite the rainy weather, everyone boarded a barge provided by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for an excursion downstream.

While on board, John Solodar from SLAS presented Colonel..... With a gift of appreciation for the joint cooperation project (SLAS and the Corps) for restoring Interior Least Terns to the Mississippi River, Also, speaking on the barge was Dan McGuiness from the NAS Upper Mississippi River Office. He had us all singing a great song. He also reminded us "a bad day on the River is better than a good day in the office!" During the excursion, many Great Egrets and Black Crowned Night Herons escorted our barge down river through Lock & Dam 27. A short time later, the barge floated under the Eads Bridge and docked at the foot of the Arch. A peregrine falcon appeared on the bridge to everyone's delight.

Friday evening, the World Bird Sanctuary gave a wonderful demonstration. Of course, WBS flew some of the hawks and owls over the crowd!

SLAS escorted a number of board members and their family members to Horseshoe Lake early Saturday morning for an early morning walk. Dense fog did not dissuade a number of folks from seeing our local celebrity bird: the Eurasian Tree Sparrow.

Saturday was full of committee meetings ranging from Public Policy to Audubon Centers to Science. Audubon Missouri held their quarterly board meeting as well. Saturday evening, the banquet was held on the newly renovated Robert E. Lee Riverboat. During the evening presentations, retiring NAS CEO, Donal O'Brien was given a copy of Susan Flader's book about Missouri's State Parks. (Susan currently serves on the AM board and has been a past NAS director and served with Mr. O'Brien).

Sunday, NAS board and staff visited Missouri Botanical Gardens and the Shaw Nature Reserve. After business was concluded, many thanks were given to AM staff and to SLAS volunteers.

Interesting Bird Bits

Tool Use

Tool use by birds is well documented, including the actual "manufacture" of such tools in at least two species. In the Galapagos Islands, the Woodpecker Finch forages like a woodpecker, but lacks the long tongue to extract its wood-boring insect prey. Instead it will obtain a cactus spine or twig-even trimming it of twiglets-to spear the insect. Across the Atlantic, Egyptian Vultures often throw several stones at ostrich eggs before they are breached and the contents can be consumed. In southern Japan, Green-backed Herons actually use bait as diverse as live insects, berries, and twigs to catch fish. The herons will even trim oversized twigs to the proper dimensions before casting the bait on the water and then waiting for the fish to approach. In North America, the best example of tool use has been the Brown-headed Nuthatch in a longleaf pine forest in Louisiana. Pine seeds are normally the bulk of the diet, but in lean years, the birds will search for insects by using one piece of bark to pry off other bits of bark. Sometimes the tool is used to expose several areas and occasionally even taken from place to place before being discarded. You can enhance your bird watching experience and potentially add to the scientific record by making careful note of bird behavior, especially while feeding.

From "The Birder's Handbook," by P. Ehrlich, D. Dobkin, and D. Wheye

From the Spring 2003 Chapter Networker Newsletter: A message from John Flicker

To The Audubon Family:

Audubon's mission of conserving and restoring natural ecosystems has never been more important than it is today. Collectively, we face an unprecedented challenge to keep our air and water clean, to restore protection for our nation's wetlands, and to save habitat for the birds and wildlife we mutually value. And together, we are working to meet that challenge.

Part of collaborative strategy to achieve this is to focus on priority places around the country. From larger places like the Everglades, Long Island Sound, Mississippi River or San Francisco Bay, to National Wildlife Refuges, locally Important Bird Areas and key wetland parcels, coordinated action is underway to achieve our conservation goals. Identifying restoration needs and issues that threaten the ecological integrity of these places is the first step to developing a comprehensive conservation strategy.

The key to finding solutions to these complex problems is combining local, state, and national advocacy. This "vertical integration" of Audubon's abilities and talent allows us to see the bigger picture and to define the larger possibilities for conservation progress. And now more than ever, an essential element of the approach is the intimate and energetic involvement of Audubon Chapters.

From identifying key issues on the ground to engaging local and state officials, Chapters provide a unique and vital component to advocacy. Letters to the Editor or visits to district Congressional offices are far more meaningful when the participants are from the community. Likewise, when Audubon visits members of Congress in Washington, participation of Chapter leaders from local Congressional districts adds a powerful dimension to those visits. It insures that our point of view is considered relevant and given a fair hearing.

Representatives from Chapters associated with a place Audubon is concerned about speak with authority. Letters and phone calls from constituents are more meaningful to members of Congress than letters from groups with no local representation or stake. Because of our Chapter presence, Audubon is uniquely able among national conservation organizations to advocate for land and water protection also anywhere in the country.

As individuals, we can act on behalf of the environment. You and I may call our representatives or send letters to our senators, but when we do this, we essentially act alone.

When we act as a group, we bring weight of numbers, local and state influence, and a national platform - backed by sound science - from which our message can be heard and can motivate to act. By combining our knowledge and power at the local and state level with national expertise and credibility, we create a potent force for conservation, one that is poised to grow in influence and effectiveness.

John Flicker, President

Tale Feathers

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St. Louis Audubon Society 2003 - 2004

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Attention!

The deadline for the Sept. issue is **August 10**. Send inquiries to Anne by E-mail ambolte@swbell.net

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Join the St. Louis Audubon Society and the National Audubon Society

As a joint member with National Audubon, you will receive National Audubon's quarterly magazine (Audubon) as well as St. Louis Audubon Society's Newsletter (Tale Feathers). Now you also have the opportunity to join only the St. Louis Audubon Society, receive Tale Feathers, and participate in the educational and conservation activities of St. Louis Audubon. There is no distinction between individual and family membership. Dues cover all members at the same address. For information, call (314) 822-6595.

St. Louis Audubon Society / National Audubon Society -- Membership Application

All applicants please check: ☐ New, or ☐ Renewal Use this form to join St. Louis Audubon / National Audubon

For joint membership in St. Louis Audubon Society and National Audubon Society, Make checks payable to **National Audubon Society** and mail to St. Louis Audubon Society, P. O. Box 220227, Kirkwood, MO 63122.

☐ Introductory Membership / \$20 ☐ Special Two-Year Introductory Membership / \$30

☐ Senior Citizen / \$15 (New and renewal) ☐ Student / \$15 (New and renewal)

☐ Renewal / \$35 (We recommend that you use the forms supplied by National Audubon)

Membership in only the St. Louis Audubon Society. Write checks payable to **SLAS**. Mail to St. Louis Audubon Society, P. O. Box 220227, Kirkwood, MO 63122.

☐ Local Chapter Membership only (St. Louis Audubon Society), Introductory and renewal. / \$15

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